The image features two hands, one above the other, cupping a glowing, multi-colored orb. The background is a vibrant, abstract pattern of swirling colors including green, yellow, orange, red, purple, and blue. The hands are positioned as if holding the orb gently. The title 'Radical Candor' is overlaid on the orb in a large, black, sans-serif font.

Radical Candor

Making 'Clean Coal'
more than an oxymoron.

BY PETER M. SANDMAN



Most promising new technologies don't keep their promises. That's why an even-money bet on a new technology is a dumb bet. Venture capitalists lose most of their bets, but they make money because their successes pay off at a lot better than even-money odds.

So is a given clean coal technology likelier than not to fail? Absolutely. Does that mean investing in clean coal is foolish? Absolutely not.

And yet it might be foolish after all. People who know more than I know might be able to make a convincing case that clean coal is a blind alley. But I doubt it – not because I'm especially hopeful about clean coal, but because what I've read about technological breakthroughs strongly suggests that it's vanishingly difficult to predict the winners.

I am a risk communication expert, not an energy policy or energy technology expert. This article is not about the prospects of various clean coal technologies, by which I mean chiefly carbon capture and storage (CCS) technologies – ways of mitigating climate change by reducing how much carbon dioxide is emitted when coal is burned. Rather, I'm going to focus not on clean coal itself, but on coal industry CCS messaging.

The bulk of this article is about coal industry hype. At the end comes what I hope is the payoff: a list of eight ways I think the industry should change its clean coal messaging if it wants to win over the people who matter most.

Knowing Your Audience

Who are the people who matter most? Not the committed allies who fervently support clean coal already. Not the fanatic enemies who are irredeemably opposed. And not the general public, which has little knowledge about coal other than it's dirty and you burn it – and little interest in learning more.

The audience that matters most is the group of people I call “attentives.” Attentives are people who are paying attention to the controversy, or at least willing to pay attention if approached properly. And attentives are open to argument. Opinion leaders (if they're not attentives themselves) get their cues on public policy issues largely from attentives. Policymakers, journalists, and eventually the general public get their cues from opinion leaders.

In my 40-plus years as a consultant on risk controversies, one of my most useful recommendations to clients has been to focus less on reaching allies, opponents, or the general public, and more on addressing the concerns of the all-important attentives.

While attentives are open to argument, they're not necessarily neutral. They have preconceptions. And their preconceptions about coal are pretty negative. That's partly because

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Are clean coal efforts likely to fail? Yes. Does that mean investing is foolish? No.

environmentalist messaging has taught them that “clean coal” is an oxymoron – like “healthy cigarettes,” to use Al Gore's comparison.¹ But why were attentives receptive to this messaging from enviros in the first place? Because it's consistent with truths they have learned elsewhere: that coal is dirty; that it emits more bad stuff when burned than other modern fuels; and that the coal industry has a history of resisting not just environmental regulation but also worker safety and other improvements.

So the attentives are primed to see coal industry ads, news releases, and websites that tout CCS as hype – which they are. And the attentives are primed to agree that “clean coal” is an oxymoron – which it needn't be if it's communicated properly.

Clean or Just Cleaner?

If taken literally, of course, “clean coal” not only hasn't been achieved; it isn't even achievable.

What may be achievable is “cleaner coal” – cleaner than coal used to be or otherwise would be, and maybe clean enough to play at least a transitional role in the quest for energy sources that won't have devastating effects on global climate. But literally “clean”? Given the many ways in which coal is dirty – SOX, NOX, particulates, mercury, radionuclides, etc., in addition to CO₂ – that's not in the cards.

I think the industry ought to come clean (so to speak) about the distinction between “clean” and “cleaner.” But I also think most people understand it already, just as most people understand that e-cigarettes really are healthier than ordinary cigarettes, even if they aren't quite “healthy cigarettes.”

In fact, clean coal is a lot like e-cigarettes – a technology that's hugely better (cleaner / healthier) than the technology it could replace – but with lots of opponents who voice four true complaints:

- It's not perfectly clean / healthy.

1. <http://thinkprogress.org/climate/2008/09/28/172379/gore-clean-coal-cigarettes/>

- It's oversold; it's not as clean / healthy as supporters pretend.
- It might seduce some people into accepting the old technology (dirty coal / smoking) it's supposed to replace.
- It might seduce some people away from better solutions (renewables / quitting altogether).

One key difference is that clean coal is mostly a promising possibility, while e-cigs are already a mature technology.

The other key difference is that quitting is a viable alternative to smoking. Renewables, on the other hand, aren't yet capable of replacing coal and other fossil fuels for many crucial uses. They might be able to do so in time. But then we're talking about one promising possibility versus another promising possibility; neither is a bird in the hand.

Most energy experts (and remember, I'm not one) say we ought to pursue all the promising possibilities: renewables and CCS ... plus comparatively mature technologies like nuclear and fracking ... plus maybe some others that are even more pie-in-the-sky than CCS. Of course some commentators say climate change is a nonissue (it's not happening or we can adapt to it without much trouble), so there's no problem here to solve. And some commentators say we can solve the problem simply by using less energy; either they think conservation will enable us to keep living the way we live or they think a return to low-energy living sounds like a lifestyle improvement.

But among those who take it as a given that (a) we will continue to need to produce a lot of energy and (b) we also need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions – and that's pretty much everybody who doesn't work for an organization with "coal" or "renewable" in its name – thinks we should try everything instead of trying to decide in advance what'll work.

For that matter, you can rationally support CCS research and development even if you believe the world should stop burning coal right now, today. If you're worried about climate change and you predict that, realistically, coal *will* continue to be used as a fuel for decades to come – if not in the U.S., then certainly in places like China – then you should want to see the prospects of CCS vigorously pursued.

So the goal of clean coal communication is to convince the attentives that CCS should be one of the things we try.

Overselling the Product

One of the biggest barriers to achieving this goal is the way the coal industry has oversold clean coal.

I don't want to oversell the case that clean coal has been oversold. Frankly, I don't see much evidence that clean coal hype is more dishonest than the hype produced on behalf of other products or causes – including competitors like fracking² and renewables.

2. <http://www.psandman.com/col/fracking.htm>

But the coal industry is widely (and I think justifiably) stigmatized as an environmental bad actor. And that's why environmental hype from the coal industry tends to backfire – especially among the attentives. Exaggeration is less tolerated once you have a bad guy reputation.

Articles hostile to clean coal almost invariably include the term "greenwashing" somewhere in their text. Exhibit A is often a 2008-2009 advertising campaign sponsored by the American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity.³ The cost of the campaign was estimated at \$35 million. The ad agency was R&R Partners, most renowned for "What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas."

I haven't found any smoking-gun lies in the ACCCE ads – just normal puffery. Enviro were nonetheless aghast. One 2008 article⁴ by Richard Coniff began: "You have to hand it to the folks at R&R Partners. They're the clever advertising agency that made its name luring legions of suckers to Las Vegas.... But R&R has now topped itself with its current ad

Much of your audience thinks 'clean coal' is an oxymoron, like 'healthy cigarettes,' to quote Al Gore.

our way of life." ("Celebrate good times, come on!") A second ad predicts a future in which coal will generate power "with even lower emissions, including the capture and storage of CO₂. It's a big challenge, but we've made a commitment, a commitment to clean."

Well, they've made a commitment to advertising, anyway.

Clean coal critiques often include a photo of a Peabody Energy ad from about the same period, featuring a lump of coal wearing sunglasses with the headline, "Clean Coal. Cool." The text of the ad is, once again, pretty pedestrian puffery:

Clean coal means energy security, jobs and economic stimulus along with a cleaner environment.

What is clean coal? Part One of clean coal has taken place in recent years, as billions of dollars in new technologies scrub away emissions.

Part Two builds on this with new, efficient coal-fueled power plants with reduced carbon footprints. Eventually, carbon capture and storage will allow plants to recycle the CO₂ back underground in deep storage or even oilfields, increasing U.S. oil production....

So let's use coal to deliver energy security, more jobs and a stronger

3. Still going strong at <http://www.americaspower.org/>

4. http://e360.yale.edu/feature/the_myth_of_clean_coal/2014/

economy. And let's solve the technology and regulatory hurdles to let America recycle its carbon.

I think these ads are overstated, like most clean coal messaging in all media. They overstate the coal industry's environmental record (which would be hard to understate), its commitment to CCS, and the grounds for confidence that clean coal technology can meaningfully reduce greenhouse gas emissions from coal-fired power plants in a reasonable time at a reasonable cost.

These overstatements may or may not have the desired impact on the opinions of the general public. They surely infuriate enviros – but almost anything from the coal industry would. The main problem is that this sort of overselling tends to backfire on attentives.

But it's very ordinary, garden-variety hype. Nothing here strikes me as the sort of false advertising that could lead to legal problems.

In 2014 a different Peabody ad did lead to legal problems – not in the U.S., but in the U.K. Here's the text, in toto:

Energy poverty. It's the world's number one human and environmental crisis. It holds people and societies down, cripples health and damages the environment.

Access to energy is an essential gateway to modern living, longer lives and powerful economies. That's why Peabody Energy is working to build awareness and support to end energy poverty, increase access to low-cost electricity and improve emissions using today's advanced clean coal technologies.

We call it Advanced Energy for Life. Because clean, modern energy is the solution for better, longer and healthier lives. Together we can brighten the faces of billions by improving energy access for all.

Be part of the solution in your community and around the world.

The way enviros see this ad is nicely summarized by Joe Romm in an August 2014 article:⁵ “Heart-warming, isn't it, that a company doing so much to destroy the climate, which in turn will have its most devastating consequences on the world's poor, still cares enough to run a greenwashing ad about how much it cares about [the] poor?”

The World Wildlife Fund filed a false advertising claim with the U.K.'s Advertising Standards Authority. The ASA rejected two of the three WWF charges. But it upheld the third – that the term “clean coal” misleadingly implied that burning coal damages the environment less than is actually the case. According to the ASA decision,⁶ “consumers were likely to interpret the word ‘clean’ as an absolute claim meaning that ‘clean coal’ processes did not produce CO₂ or other emissions.”

In response, Peabody added a footnote⁷ specifying that by “clean coal” it meant “the collection of technologies that reduce key power plant emissions of sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, particulates and mercury. These technologies are in broad use globally and are commercially available.”

The footnote is probably enough to pass muster with the ASA, even though it falls short of real candor: “We don't remove all the conventional pollutants and we're a long way from figuring out what to do about the greenhouse gases.” Of course it hasn't ameliorated the enviros' anger – but even my version presumably wouldn't do that.

Though I wouldn't call it false advertising, there is something deceptive going on here, with or without the footnote. The coal industry spends millions trying to transition the societal meaning of “clean coal” from reducing conventional pollutants

In fact, clean coal is a lot like e-cigarettes – not perfectly clean, not perfectly healthy, but still hugely better.

(where the progress has been real, albeit under pressure) to sequestering greenhouse gases (where the progress is mostly in the future conditional tense). Then it runs ads claiming or at least implying that clean coal is a reality, not just a good intention. And when enviros point out that commercially viable CCS is far from a reality, the industry says, hey, we didn't say anything about CCS, we're talking about SO_x and NO_x.

This deceptive strategy is sometimes called a Motte-and-Bailey argument,⁸ named after two parts of a medieval castle. You make a claim you can't support but want people to believe (the Bailey). When challenged, you retreat to the Motte, a version of the claim that's more defensible, but not actually what you're hoping to convince people of. When the challengers go away you revert to your Bailey.

Given the coal industry's widespread use of Motte-and-Bailey vis-à-vis its two meanings for “clean coal” (conventional emissions reduction and CCS), it was fun to read this on an American Coal Council webpage⁹ entitled “Coal: Myths and Facts”:

Myth 2: *There are no “clean coal” plants operating in the United States.*

Fact: *There are many examples of clean coal technologies operating throughout the U.S. and the world.*

To be able to make the claim that there are no clean coal plants

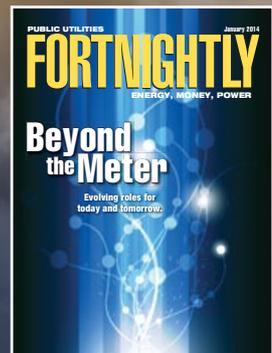
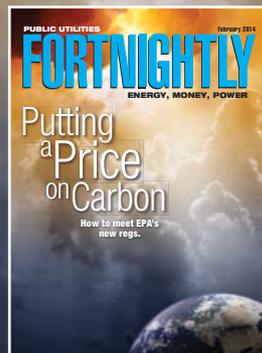
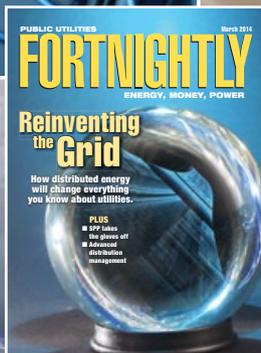
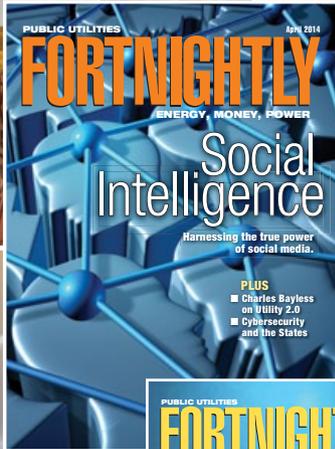
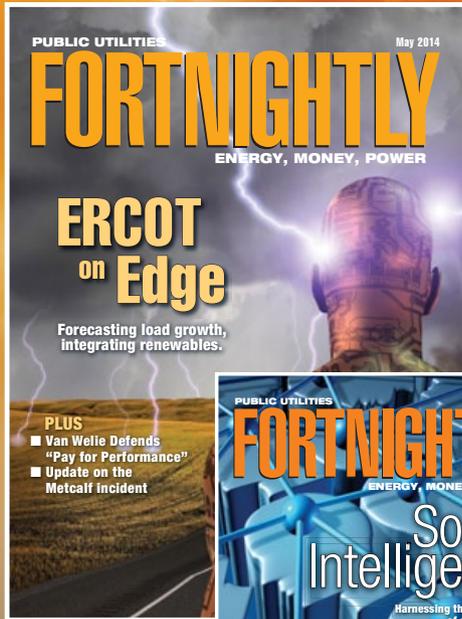
5. <http://thinkprogress.org/climate/2014/08/20/3473654/clean-coal-misleading-public/>

6. http://d2ouvy59p0dg6k.cloudfront.net/downloads/2014_08_07_adjudication_final.pdf

7. https://www.advancedenergyforlife.com/sites/default/files/Let%27s%20Brighten%20the%20Many%20Faces%20of%20Global%20Energy%20Poverty_0.pdf

8. <http://slatestarcodex.com/2014/11/03/all-in-all-another-brick-in-the-motte/>

9. <http://www.americancoalcouncil.org/?page=coalfacts>



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operating in the U.S., special interest groups have had to continually redefine the term “clean” to suit the needs of their latest marketing campaign and membership drive.

The reality is that while coal use has more than doubled over the past 40 years, overall emissions of the six common pollutants on

the EPA’s National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) list have decreased by more than 60%....

Since 2009 there hasn’t been a lot of clean coal advertising – perhaps because public concern about climate change (and the environment generally) has declined. Environmentalist campaigns

against clean coal have declined as well; several of the enviro websites that used to track coal industry “greenwashing” have disappeared or been repurposed. Maybe the 2014 Peabody ad is a sign that the coal industry, at least, thinks concern is on the upswing again.

Clean coal PR continued to flourish even during the hiatus in clean coal advertising. And there have been more than a few clean coal articles in 2014-2015 that were neutral or even positive, rather than hostile. CCS still doesn’t have anything like the enviable image renewables have, but the gap may be narrowing.

See for example, “Renewables Aren’t Enough. Clean Coal Is the Future” (*Wired*, March 2014, by Charles C. Mann).¹⁰ Or “Clean Coal Era Begins” (*Scientific American*, October 2014, by David Biello).¹¹

In December 2014, environmental activist Jeff Biggers posted a commentary on Al Jazeera America entitled “Dear media: stop using the phrase ‘clean coal.’”¹² Biggers complained that “familiar headlines about ‘clean coal’ endeavors – the coal industry’s still experimental carbon capture and storage operations – continue to roll off the newswires.” He went on:

An article published in the online trade magazine Environment and Energy Publishing on Nov. 24, for instance, bore the headline “Newest Ill. clean coal project searches for a way to sell its energy.” Bloomberg blasted this headline only days before: “EU risks blackouts without clean-coal inducement.” Earlier this month, an article in The Hill ran the lead: “The clean coal industry is asking Hillary Clinton to be the ‘voice of reason’ for coal if she makes a run for the White House.”

“Clean coal” is an industry marketing term. Failing to enclose it in quotes, which the AP Stylebook does not require, and instead presenting it as a demonstrable fact is inaccurate and lazy – and offensive.

If we are really seeing the beginning of a greater mainstream interest in CCS, does that mean my critique of coal industry hype is off-base? Could the hype actually be helping to advance the CCS cause? Or is interest growing (if it is) despite the hype?

I think it’s the latter, though I can’t prove it. It’s worth noting that the vast majority of the comments responding to Biello’s and Mann’s articles were hostile, while the responses to Biggers were more supportive. The attentives are still extremely skeptical about clean coal.

Environmentalists are extremely skeptical too, of course. Beyond skeptical. Most of the environmental movement leadership claims to be near-certain that CCS is a blind alley.

This near-certainty is self-serving. If CCS starts to prove itself, coal will get a much-needed boost. That will be bad news

for the fight against particulates and other coal-related evils. And it will be bad news for renewables, already damaged by the success of fracking and the decline in the price of oil and natural gas. Environmentalists desperately want progress on climate change – but not that way. (This prospect makes all the more admirable those environmentalists who reluctantly concede that CCS, too, deserves a shot.)

So the attentives are suspended between two armies of self-serving propagandists:

■ The coal industry implies that CCS is much further along than it is, and much surer to succeed than it is. Meanwhile it fights some carbon-reducing initiatives and invests very modestly in others.

■ The environmental movement claims that CCS is a blind alley, rarely acknowledging that it’s dissing a competitor. Its strongest argument is the gap between the impression the industry tries to give and reality on (and under) the ground.

You’re not trying to prove that carbon capture and storage will work. Rather, to find out if it can work. That’s the truth. You should say so.

As a communication professional, I’d say the environmental movement is playing the better hand – unless the coal industry changes its messaging.

What Has to Change

If the coal industry were my client, my proposed clean coal messaging agenda would go something like this:

1. Stress that the CCS meaning of “clean coal” is only a possibility worth pursuing – not a current reality or even a safe bet.

2. Acknowledge that CCS has been oversold, say you’re sorry, and promise not to oversell it again.

3. Acknowledge your stake. And acknowledge that your stake means you can’t be trusted.

4. Assert that environmentalists have a stake too, and can’t be trusted either.

5. Assert that pursuing the CCS version of “clean coal” is good for everyone, not just for your industry.

6. Acknowledge that skepticism if justified not only about the coal industry, but also about CCS itself.

7. Take some of the blame for skepticism over CCS.

8. Talk about current CCS efforts as experiments and hurdles, not as demonstration projects. And make them accountable.

The first bullet point sums up the core CCS message: that carbon capture and storage may or may not turn out viable, but it would be foolish not to give it a shot.

The other seven messages on my list all aim to make this one credible, and all need a little elaboration.

10. <http://www.wired.com/2014/03/clean-coal/>

11. <http://blogs.scientificamerican.com/observations/2014/10/07/clean-coal-era-begins/>

12. <http://america.aljazeera.com/opinions/2014/12/clean-coal-media.html>

2. Acknowledge that CCS has been oversold, say you're sorry, and promise not to oversell it again.

Every client I manage to interest in my “radical candor” approach to controversy asks the same question: “Okay, we can wrap our minds around being more honest in future. But do we really have to admit how dishonest we have been up till now?”

The answer is yes. For one thing, people will notice your new candor much more quickly if you explicitly contrast it with your prior hype. The acknowledgment buys a much more open-minded second look from people who have learned to mistrust you. In addition, acknowledging the hype, apologizing for it, and promising to reform are preconditions for forgiveness. (For more on this, see my 12-minute YouTube Video on “Wallowing in Your Prior Misbehavior.”¹³)

Don't worry too much that your acknowledgment will clue in audience members who hadn't realized you were hyping CCS. I doubt there are many of those left among the attentives; enviros have been cluing them in for years.

And don't worry that enviros will use your acknowledgment against you. They will. But that's better than their using your dishonesty against you. They'd rather keep on saying, “What the industry doesn't want you to know....” But you should want to force them to say this instead: “Even the industry admits....” That's a much weaker attack.

The only real downside of radical candor is that your allies will hate it. You should take steps to help them bear it, starting with not blindsiding them. Warn your allies before you come clean with everybody else.

3. Acknowledge your stake. And acknowledge that your stake means you can't be trusted.

The coal industry is best off if everybody thinks (mistakenly) that CCS is a done deal, and thus that climate change concerns are no reason to regulate coal more harshly, much less to shut coal-fired plants down.

The coal industry is worst off if everybody thinks (mistakenly) that CCS is a pipe dream, guaranteed to fail, and thus that we need to get over our addiction to coal posthaste.

The middle is if everybody thinks (correctly) that CCS is a possibility worth pursuing – worth *helping* the industry pursue and worth *making* the industry pursue.

Explain all this. Concede that you have been trying to sell the first option. Say you've given up on that, and now want to sell the middle option – the truth – instead.

Explain also that people are right not to trust what the coal industry says about CCS – not just because of the history of hype, but also because you have an existential stake in convincing everyone that coal can coexist with greenhouse gas reduction. Say you get it that people will be listening to you (if they listen

at all) skeptically rather than trustingly.

4. Assert that environmentalists have a stake too, and can't be trusted either.

You're going to like this message.

Most environmental groups are backing a different climate change solution than CCS: renewables. And most environmental groups hate coal quite apart from their climate change concerns – for perfectly sensible reasons like particulates and mercury and sheared-off mountaintops. (You won't like that part of the message, but you can't leave it out.)

So the public can't trust what environmentalists say about CCS either. They're more committed to killing coal than to cleaning coal. They don't *want* CCS to work.

Your ability to deploy this message credibly depends on your also deploying the previous one, about your own untrustworthiness. Don't ever say #4 without #3. Ever.

If CCS works – if we can burn coal and still control GHGs – then we're all better off.

5. Assert that pursuing the CCS version of “clean coal” is good for everyone, not just for your industry.

You'll be comfortable with this message too.

If CCS works – if there's a feasible way to make burning coal compatible with reducing greenhouse gases – then everyone will be better off. It's good for the U.S.; it means jobs, energy independence, etc. It's good for coal-dependent countries like China and Australia. It's good for remedying energy poverty in the developing world. Above all, it's good for our chances of ameliorating climate change.

This differs from your current messaging in one important way: the “if.” Make sure you don't sound like you're claiming that CCS is feasible. All you're claiming is that *if* it's feasible that will be extremely good news for everyone, not just for your industry.

6. Acknowledge that skepticism is justified not only about the coal industry, but also about CCS itself.

It's not just environmentalists who think CCS is a dead end, or at least too tenuous a long shot to merit much investment. So do some less-embattled energy experts.

Some point to the “parasitics” of CCS, claiming that it's scientifically unfeasible to sequester CO₂ without the sequestering operation releasing even more CO₂. Some say the economics will never be feasible. Some worry about scale – that the amount of CO₂ we would need to sequester is more than we could conceivably cope with. Some worry about time – that we can't afford the decades it may take to get CCS up and running, or that we can't guarantee the centuries we may need to keep the CO₂ from reaching the surface again.

Two other sources of skepticism you need to acknowledge: (a) the concern that the mere possibility of “clean coal” could

13. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WS9NTpyjgZ0>

resuscitate the fortunes of dirty coal – that CCS may remain forever a hypothetical future deployed to rationalize a dangerous present; and (b) the concern that CCS could inhibit progress toward more viable renewables technologies – that the CCS/renewables competition may be a zero-sum game and “both” may be a politically impossible option.

You have far more expert advisers than me – a mere communicator – to tell you what the dominant objections to CCS are.

The point is to acknowledge them. You accept that CCS might be a long shot, as some experts think it is. But every proposed response to climate change has downsides, and every potential game-changer is speculative. Skepticism about CCS is justified. Neglecting to give CCS a shot would be foolish.

7. Take some of the blame for skepticism over CCS.

If CCS weren't the climate change *deus ex machina* for fossil fuel industries (gas and oil as well as coal), people might be less skeptical about it. Imagine for example that enviros were pushing hard on behalf of CCS technology, and coal industry lobbyists were objecting that it's unproved and impractical. The prognosis for support among the attentives might be better.

And if industry hadn't oversold CCS in the first place, it might be easier to be credible now that CCS is worth pursuing.

Another way the industry has provoked skepticism is by routinely lobbying for government CCS subsidies on the grounds that the technology is super-expensive and needs a kick start. It's a reasonable argument, especially given the subsidies to renewables and other energy options. But these two simultaneous industry positions – telling the public that the technology is good to go while telling the government that it's speculative and needs to be subsidized – don't coexist very well.

Taking the blame for provoking skepticism is a very effective means to reduce that skepticism: “Perhaps the worst thing about our history of overselling ‘clean coal’ is the way that has helped undermine many people's support for CCS. Talk about self-defeating! The least we can do now is admit the hype, stop the hype, and help people reconsider CCS in a new atmosphere of candor.”

8. Talk about current CCS efforts as experiments and hurdles, not as demonstration projects. And make them accountable.

I have read only a little about the various CCS projects that are planned or underway – among them FutureGen 2.0 in Illinois,

the Boundary Dam Power Plant in Saskatchewan, the Kemper Facility in Mississippi, and GreenGen in China.

They all look iffy in one way or another (or several). (FutureGen 2.0 just lost its government subsidy and may be doomed.¹⁴ That “2.0” tells you this isn't FutureGen's first crisis.)

I also tried to read February 2014 Department of Energy Congressional testimony¹⁵ about the dozens of U.S. CCS projects DOE was supporting, and couldn't get through it.

I came away from my very sketchy review convinced that these efforts should be framed as experiments and hurdles, not as demonstration projects. You're not trying to prove that CCS works. You're trying to find out if it can work. Say so.

Then make sure you include strong accountability mechanisms in every project. Create an oversight/evaluation team that includes not just CCS supporters but also CCS critics. The ideal candidate

Admit you have a stake. Explain that to your audience. But so does your opponent. Explain that too.

is an environmental activist who hopes and expects the project will fall flat, but who is open-minded enough to notice if it doesn't and honorable enough to say so. And yes, there are such people. I have been helping clients put critics on their evaluation teams for decades.

Why not use neutrals instead? Because on an issue as controversial as CCS, neutrals will stop looking neutral to whichever side they ultimately decide is wrong. The pro-CCS endorsement most able to sway an audience of skeptical attentives is the reluctant endorsement of someone who'd be a lot more comfortable on the other side.

Give Radical Candor a Try

There's more, but these eight are challenging enough. Even if you can't manage to implement them all, the ones you do implement should help.

I am not claiming that this agenda is what any communication professional would recommend. To the contrary, most would recommend what the industry is already doing: garden-variety business-as-usual misleading-but-not-actually-lying hype.

It's not working and it's not going to work. To earn a second hearing for clean coal from the all-important attentives, the industry should consider trying something new: radical candor. ■

14. <http://www.bna.com/doe-suspends-billion-n17179922773/>

15. <http://docs.house.gov/meetings/IF/IF02/20140211/101742/HHRG-113-IF02-Wstate-KlaraS-20140211.pdf>